CLAIMS

1-4.   (Canceled).

5.   (Previously Presented) The method claimed in claim 22, wherein the control station queries the Fibre Channel switch in response to a notification received from the host via an Internet Protocol (IP) network.

6.   (Original) The method claimed in claim 5, wherein the host connects to the IP network using a DHCP protocol.

Claims 7-10 (Canceled).

11.   (Previously Presented) The method claimed in claim 22, wherein the database uses the lightweight directory access protocol (LDAP).

12.   (Currently Amended) A system for automatically configuring a diskless host computer upon being physically connected to a network, comprising:

at least one diskless host computer that automatically boots an operating system as a result of being connected to the network, wherein the diskless host computer was not previously connected to the network;

a storage system on which are stored a plurality of host configurations, each configuration including an operating system;

a switch coupled to each diskless host computer and having a plurality of ports, each port coupled to the storage system; and

a control station computer configured for:

monitoring for receipt of ~~an identifier~~ a World Wide Name (WWN) transmitted by the diskless host computer to the switch in accordance with a Fibre Channel log-in protocol,

accessing, in response to receiving the WWN, a database comprising a correspondence between ~~an identifier~~ a WWN of each of a plurality of diskless host computers and a configuration associated with the corresponding diskless host computer in order to look up a configuration corresponding to the received ~~identifier~~ WWN transmitted by the diskless host computer, said configuration identifying the operating system associated with the diskless host computer, and

directing the switch to provide the diskless host computer access to a storage device on which the operating system identified in the configuration is stored;

wherein the storage system is configured to copy the operating system to the storage device, to which the switch provides the diskless host computer with access, from another device of the storage system, said another device configured to maintain an unaltered copy of the operating system; and

wherein ~~the operating system copied to the storage device from another device of the storage system is altered based on one or more requirements associated with the diskless host computer~~ the database comprises a correspondence between a WWN of at least one diskless host computer not previously connected to the network and a configuration associated with the corresponding diskless host computer.

13.   (Canceled).

14.   (Canceled).

15.   (Currently Amended) The system claimed in claim [[14]] 12, wherein the a control station computer queries the Fibre Channel switch for the WWN and looks up the configuration in the database in response to the WWN.

16.   (Previously Presented) The system claimed in claim 12, wherein the database operates under the lightweight directory access protocol (LDAP).

17-21 (Canceled).

22. (Currently Amended) A method for automatically booting a diskless host computer upon being connected to a Fibre Channel network, comprising:

physically connecting the diskless host computer to the network, wherein the diskless host computer was not previously connected to the network;

receiving, at a Fibre Channel switch, a World Wide Name (WWN) from the diskless host computer in accordance with a Fibre Channel log-in protocol;

looking up a configuration corresponding to the WWN received from the diskless host computer, wherein looking up a configuration corresponding to the WWN received from the diskless host computer further comprises:

querying, by a control station computer, the Fibre Channel switch for the WWN received from the diskless host computer; and

accessing, by the control station computer in response to receiving the WWN, a database comprising a correspondence between a WWN of each of a plurality of diskless host computers and a configuration associated with the corresponding diskless host computer in order to look up the configuration corresponding to the obtained WWN, said configuration identifying an operating system associated with the diskless host computer, wherein the database comprises a correspondence between a WWN of at least one diskless host computer not previously connected to the network and a configuration associated with the corresponding diskless host computer;

copying the operating system identified in the configuration to a storage device from another storage device, said another storage device configured to maintain an unaltered copy of the operating system, wherein the operating system copied to the storage device is altered based on one or more requirements associated with the diskless host computer;

providing the diskless host computer access to the storage device, to which the operating system identified in the configuration was copied; and

the diskless host computer booting from the operating system copied to and stored on the storage device in response to being connected to network.

23.   (Currently Amended) A method for automatically booting a diskless computer upon being physically connected to a network, comprising:

physically connecting the diskless computer to the network, wherein the diskless computer was not previously connected to the network;

transmitting, in response to being physically connected to the network, an identifier from the diskless computer;

receiving the identifier by a control station computer;

querying, by the control station computer, in response to receiving the identifier, a database with the identifier received to determine an operating system associated with the diskless computer, wherein the database comprises a correspondence between an identifier of each of a plurality of diskless computers and a configuration associated with the corresponding diskless computer, said configuration identifying an operating system, wherein the database comprises a correspondence between a WWN of at least one diskless computer not previously connected to the network and a configuration associated with the corresponding diskless computer;

copying the operating system identified in the configuration to a storage device from another storage device, said another storage device configured to maintain an unaltered copy of the operating system, wherein the operating system copied to the storage device is altered based on one or more requirements associated with the diskless host computer;

copying the identified operating system from the storage device, to which the operating system identified in the configuration was copied, to the diskless computer over the network; and

booting, as a result of being physically connected to the network, the diskless computer from the identified operating system.

24.   (Previously Presented) The method claimed in claim 23, wherein the network comprises an IP network.

25.   (Previously Presented) The method claimed in claim 24, wherein the diskless computer connects to the IP network using a DHCP protocol.

26.   (Previously Presented) The method claimed in claim 23, wherein the network comprises a Fibre Channel network.

27.   (Previously Presented) The method claimed in claim 26, wherein the identifier is unique to an adapter used to connect the diskless computer to the network.

28.   (Canceled).

29.   (Canceled).